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SUBJECT: Santiago Feb. 17 Meda Report

#### Lead Story

¶1. President-elect Sebasti????n Pi????era sold 9.7% of his shares in Las Condes medical clinic for US\$37 million (Financial daily Diario Financiero, 2/17).

#### Haiti

¶2. Brazilian Foreign Minister Amorim arrived in Santiago last week with two proposals. He proposed to President-elect Pi????era the creation of a joint initiative to rebuild public buildings in Port-au-Prince. In another meeting with his Chilean counterpart Mariano Fernandez, Amorim submitted a proposal for President Bachelet to work with former President Clinton to coordinate international aid to Haiti. Brazil's idea if for Bachelet to act as Latin America's representative and eventually add a European official (Conservative, independent La Tercera, 2/17).

¶3. The underlying goal of Brazil's proposal for Bachelet to join Clinton is to create an international cooperation agency for the island, in the framework of United Nations. Bachelet not only wants to know more about Lula's proposal, she also wants to hear what the U.S. government and Clinton have to say about the initiative. Chile has already approved a Colombian proposal, whereby every country in the region would take responsibility for one particular region and issue in Haiti. Meanwhile, La Moneda is stirred by rumors that Lula will announce a reconstruction plan for Haiti together with President-elect Pi????era (El Mercurio, 2/17)

#### Pi????era

¶4. Last Friday, Pi????era confirmed that the first country he would travel to after swearing-in would be Brazil. In that context, Pi????era said now he would visit Argentina twice over the next weeks: Before swearing-in and the following week as he returns from Brazil. His trips are intended as a gesture to Argentine President Kirchner, who has sent Pi????era the message that she hopes he would

follow the steps of his predecessors and visit Buenos Aires before traveling to another country (El Mercurio, 2/27).

¶5. Sources said that Pi????era will name well-known Concertacion officials as undersecretaries. The acting president of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), Ren????n Fuentealba, said that Pi????era's attempt to recruit more people from his party "has no other purpose but to destroy" the PDC party (Conservative, independent La Tercera, 2/17).

¶6. Pi????era's 9.7% shares of Las Condes medical clinic were sold yesterday for US\$37 million. This is the first company from which Pi????era had disassociated himself. His other investments are:

- 100% of television station Chilevision. He announced that he would transfer the station to a non-profit foundation, but would retain the authority to name the foundation's board.

- Lan Chile airlines. There is already an agreement to sell his 26.3% shares to the Cueto family, but the transaction has not yet occurred.

- Colo Colo soccer team: Pi????era said he would not sell his share of the team, but has yet to determine what mechanism he will use to maintain ownership (Financial Diario Financiero, 2/17).

#### Chile-Peru

¶7. Chile will launch its own Terrestrial Observations Satellite System (SSOT, in Spanish) at the end of 2010. But Peruvian daily El Comercio expressed concern that the satellite would be used for military and intelligence purposes against Peru (Afternoon, conservative La Segunda, 2/16).

#### Iran

¶8. Headline: "Rapid increase in the temperature of the nuclear debate -- Iranian President warns that his country would respond if the Security Council applies new sanctions"

Subheadline: U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Admiral Michael Mullen admitted that military action against Iran "is a possibility," but added that what prevails is the search for a diplomatic solution. Meanwhile, President Obama announced yesterday the construction of the first atomic energy plant in the U.S. in the last thirty years" (Government-owned La Nacion, 2/17).

¶9. Headline: "Everyone wants Brazil to get involved": The Iranian president and a group of U.S. congressmen agreed for Brazil to act as mediator in the controversy over Teheran's nuclear programs, but for different reasons. In a press conference, Ahmadinejad stressed that Brazil and Iran are similar in that "both want to change things." Republican Congressman Roger Walker, on the other hand, said, "It would be good if Brazil and other countries can exert more pressure to persuade Iran to leave the search for nuclear weapons" (La Nacion, 2/17).

#### Greece

¶10. Editorial: "The magnitude of the disaster in Greece ... has reached unforeseeable levels.... The key now is for the economic authorities to realize that this is an economic, political, and social dilemma, as citizen demonstrations are showing" (Diario Financiero, 2/17).

## Obama-Nuclear Plants

¶11. Headline: "Obama puts the U.S. back on the path to nuclear energy by announcing (the construction of) the first (nuclear) plant in 30 years"

The U.S. President intends to come out of the economic crisis using alternative energy. Many companies had stopped using this type of energy due to the high costs involved, the opposition of environmental groups, and safety issues (El Mercurio, 2/17).

¶12. Headline: "Obama announces the first nuclear plant in the United States in over 30 years"

Subheadline: The U.S. president will issue guarantees on loans for US\$8 billion to build two nuclear plants in the state of Georgia. The White House hopes to create 3,000 new jobs with this project (Diario Financiero, 2/17).  
SIMONS